



Affiliated Societies Seminar

Successful Grants and Sharing Your Collection

13 October 2026 | 10.30 am to 3.30 pm
History House, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney OR join us online

OVERVIEW

Join us at History House or online for a day of practical insights into grant applications and sharing historical collections. Hear directly from experienced grant assessors and learn what makes a strong application, common mistakes to avoid, and how to develop a realistic project plan and budget. In the afternoon, explore practical ways to make your collections more accessible, from copyright and permissions to eHive and AI-assisted transcription.

The seminar is designed for members of RAHS Affiliated Societies, as well as anyone interested in applying for grants, developing community history projects, or caring for and sharing a collection. All presentations and panel discussions will be practical and accessible, and no specialist knowledge is required. Those attending will have opportunities to ask questions, share feedback and suggest topics they would like to explore in more depth at future workshops and events.

PROGRAM [last updated 9 September 2026]

SESSION A: GRANT APPLICATIONS: TIPS FOR WHAT WORKS

Session A: Morning	10.30 am to 12.30 pm Chair: RAHS President Carol Liston AO
Overview	Hear from experienced grant assessors about what makes an application stand out and what tips it into the "no" pile. They'll also bust some common myths about what does and doesn't get funded. You'll also learn about two key documents that set you up for grant success: the project plan and budget, and get tips on how to prepare them.
10.30 to 10.35 am	Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome
10.35 am to 11.00 am	Alison Wishart <i>Create NSW Museums and History Grants</i>: Drawing on her direct experience as an assessor for this grant program, Alison Wishart will explain the purpose of these grants, the funding available and the types of projects that can be supported. She will discuss the characteristics of successful applications, common problems with unsuccessful applications and how the assessment process works.
11.00 am to 11.20 am	Tony Gilmour <i>Project Plans and Budgets</i>: Building on his experience writing grant applications and drawing on skills from his commercial career, Tony will help demystify project planning and show how to develop realistic budgets. This practical, non-technical presentation will use real-life examples. Tony will explain grant jargon and how GST works in relation to grants.
11.20 am to 11.40 am	Morning tea
11.40 am to 12.15 pm	Samantha Friend, Carol Liston AO, Angela Phippen <i>Grants Panel Discussion</i>: Gain insights from Create NSW Local History Grant assessors that are relevant to all grant applications. Learn about common mistakes, what makes a project stand out and how to increase your organisation's chances of success.
12.15 pm to 12.30 pm	Announcement of the 2026 Create NSW Local History Grants grant recipients

LUNCH: 12.30 PM TO 1.30 PM IN THE RECEPTION ROOMS AT HISTORY HOUSE

SESSION B: SHARING YOUR COLLECTIONS: TECHNOLOGY, COPYRIGHT AND PERMISSIONS

Session B: Afternoon	1.30 pm to 3.30 pm Chair: To be confirmed
Overview	This session opens with the RAHS Certificates of Achievement and Appreciation, celebrating the volunteers who preserve and share community history across NSW. From there, we turn to the tools of the trade: how to make your collection discoverable using eHive, how AI can speed up transcribing handwritten records, and what free technology is available if your budget doesn't stretch far. We'll also cover the practical side of sharing a collection, from copyright and consent through to permissions, so you can share your collections safely.
1.30 pm to 1.35 pm	Welcome to Session B
1.35 pm to 1.55 pm	RAHS Certificates of Achievement and Appreciation: We begin the afternoon by celebrating volunteers nominated by their societies for their dedication to preserving and sharing local and community history across New South Wales. These awards recognise their achievements and generous contributions to their communities.
1.55 pm to 2.15 pm	Carol Liston AO <i>Sharing Your Historical Collections</i>: Historical societies hold an extraordinary array of material, including photographs, publications, oral histories, transcripts, manuscripts and more. But how can these collections be shared with a wider audience responsibly? Carol Liston will explore the practical, legal and ethical questions historical societies should consider before making material publicly available, including copyright, consent and permissions, and offer guidance on sharing collections while respecting the people who created, contributed to and appear in them.
2.15 pm to 2.35 pm	Debbie Sommers <i>Making Collections Discoverable with eHive</i>: A practical discussion drawing on the experiences of societies at different stages of using eHive, including getting started, describing different types of material and making an established collection accessible online.
2.35 pm to 2.50 pm	Afternoon tea
2.50 pm to 3.10 pm	Michelle Nichols OAM <i>Using AI to Transcribe Handwritten Records</i>: Michelle Nichols will introduce AI-assisted transcription and show how tools such as Transkribus can make handwritten records searchable and easier to read.
3.10 pm to 3.25 pm	Discussion and audience questions
3.25 pm to 3.30 pm	Closing remarks and invitation to refreshments

REFRESHMENTS AND NETWORKING:

From 3.30 pm, Affiliated Society members are invited to join History House project supporters and friends in the Reception Rooms for refreshments, conversation and an opportunity to build connections. Join us for our final in-person event of 2026 before work begins on the new internal lift at History House. The project will be completed in March 2027.

ABOUT THE SPEAKERS AND PANEL MEMBERS

SESSION A:

Alison Wishart | *Create NSW Museums and History Grants*

Alison Wishart has worked in museums and libraries for over 20 years and has been an assessor for the last three rounds of the Create NSW Museums and History Grants. She is also an RAHS Councillor and a member of the Professional Historians Association NSW-ACT.

Tony Gilmour | *Project Plans and Budgets*

Dr Tony Gilmour worked in banking for 20 years, then from 2012 to 2021 ran a management consulting business supporting community housing organisations. He is now a full-time historian and writer. Tony is Vice President of Kiama Historical Society, a regional RAHS Affiliated Society, and an RAHS Councillor.

Samantha Friend, Carol Liston AO, Angela Phippen | *Grants Panel Discussion*

- Samantha Friend is Chair of the Historic Houses Association of Australia and a past President of the Bathurst District Historical Society. She has a longstanding involvement in community history and heritage and is a member of the Royal Australian Historical Society's Affiliated Societies Committee.
- Adjunct Associate Professor Carol Liston AO is President of the Royal Australian Historical Society and a leading historian of early New South Wales. Her research focuses on colonial society, families and institutions. She has extensive experience using government, church and archival records to reconstruct the lives of individuals and communities.
- Angela Phippen is a retired librarian with over 40 years' experience in local and family history. She was librarian at the Society of Australian Genealogists for 17 years and Local Studies Librarian with City of Ryde Libraries for 21 years. Her research interests are broad, including war memorials, Chinese market gardens and divorce records in NSW. In 2025 she was a Visiting Fellow at the State Library of NSW.

SESSION B

Carol Liston AO | *Sharing Your Historical Collections*

See Session A

Debbie Sommers | *Making Collections Discoverable with eHive*

Debbie Sommers is Vice-President of the Port Macquarie Historical Society and Curator of the Port Macquarie Museum. An IMAGinE Award winner, Debbie has extensive experience in museum management, collection documentation and making regional collections more accessible. She is a strong advocate for volunteer-run museums and has contributed to museum development and heritage initiatives across regional NSW.

Michelle Nichols OAM | *Using AI to Transcribe Handwritten Records*

Michelle Nichols has been occupied with local and family history for most of her life. She has been employed as the Local History Librarian at Hawkesbury Library for 46 years. Michelle has authored a number of historical books, regularly contributes articles to magazines and newsletters and interest in research, cemeteries and early photography. She received an OAM for her work in local history in 2001 and blogs at Hawkesbury Heritage.



The Local History Grants Program is a Create NSW devolved funding program administered by the Royal Australian Historical Society on behalf of the NSW Government. It supports research and publication projects that explore local, community and regional history across NSW. The program was formerly known as the Cultural Grants.